

Scripture Study

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Cycle B



Opening prayer

Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24 (Ps 30:2,4-6,11-13) 2 Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15 **Mark 5:21-24,35b-43**

Overview of the Gospel:

- Last Sunday if we celebrated the 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time (sometimes it's supplanted by the Solemnity of the Nativity of John the Baptist), we heard about Jesus calming the sea. Immediately after that miracle, he spends some time on the eastern shore of the sea in the Gentile region of Gerasa, where he heals a demoniac (Mark 5:1-20). This Sunday's Gospel reading picks up at verse 21, after he returns to the western (Carpenternaum) side of the sea. For the sake of brevity, we will primarily be looking at the optional shorter reading, which concerns the synagogue ruler Jairus and his sick daughter.
- The synagogue ruler (or *archisynagogist*) was not a priest or rabbi, but one who's function was to organize the meetings of the synagogue on Sabbaths and holy days, to lead the prayer and hymns, and to indicate who should explain Sacred Scripture (See Luke 4:16-21).
- As soon as Jesus disembarks from the boat, Jairus throws himself at his feet. He begs Jesus to lay his hands on the little girl. This was a common gesture of healers at the time. As it turns out, Jesus did not do so (verse 41).
- (The stories of Jairus and the sick woman do have interesting parallels: both involved females; both involve healing as a result of faith; both involve "12 years;" both involve Jesus' touch.)

Questions:

- For all the people pressing for Jesus' attention, two (Jairus and the sick woman in verses 25-34) get through to him in this passage. Why?
- How is Jairus' situation similar to that of the sick woman? How is it different?
- What is Jesus' reaction to the news that the child is dead? Jairus' reaction? Why did Jesus say the child was asleep? Why was it not necessary for Jesus to lay his hands on the child to heal her? As Jairus, what would you say to the crowd outside your house after Jesus left?
- Mark tells us that Jairus "fell at Jesus' feet" and begged him to heal his daughter. When was the last time you "fell at Jesus' feet" and begged for help?
- What does Jesus "ignore" in verse 36? What does he tell Jairus? What might God advise you to ignore in order to exercise faith?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 547-549, 993-994, 2616

Closing prayer

In times of spiritual cooling and laziness, imagine in your heart those past times when you were full of zeal and solicitude in all things, even the smallest; remember your past efforts and the energy with which you opposed those who wished to obstruct your progress. These recollections will reawaken your soul from its deep sleep, will invest it anew with the fire of zeal, will raise it, as it were, from the dead and will make it engage in an ardent struggle against the devil and sin, thus returning to its former rank. -St. Isaak of Syria

Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings found in the bulletin!

Jesus said, 'Who touched me?'

Scripture: *Mark 5:21-43*

Meditation: Do you approach the Lord with expectant faith? People in desperate or helpless circumstances were not disappointed when they sought Jesus out. What drew them to Jesus? Was it hope for a miracle or a word of comfort in their affliction? What did the elderly woman who had suffered greatly for twelve years expect Jesus to do for her? And what did a grieving father expect Jesus to do about his lost beloved daughter? Jesus gave hope where there seemed to be no human cause for it because his hope was directed to God. He spoke words of hope to the woman (*Take heart, daughter!*) to ignite the spark of faith in her (*your faith has made you well!*). A 4th century church father, Ephrem the Syrian, comments on this miracle: "Glory to you, hidden Son of God, because your healing power is proclaimed through the hidden suffering of the afflicted woman. Through this woman whom they could see, the witnesses were enabled to behold the divinity that cannot be seen. Through the Son's own healing power his divinity became known. Through the afflicted woman's being healed her faith was made manifest. She caused him to be proclaimed, and indeed was honored with him. For truth was being proclaimed together with his heralds. If she was a witness to his divinity, he in turn was a witness to her faith. ..He saw through to her hidden faith, and gave her a visible healing."



Jesus also gave divine hope to a father who had just lost a beloved child. It took considerable courage and risk for the ruler of a synagogue to openly go to Jesus and to invite the scorn of his neighbors and kin. Even the hired mourners laughed at him in scorn. Their grief was devoid of any hope. Nonetheless, Jesus took the girl by the hand and delivered her from the grasp of death. Peter Chrysologus, a 5th century church father comments on this miracle: "This man was a ruler of the synagogue, and versed in the law. He had surely read that while God created all other things by his word, man had been created by the hand of God. He trusted therefore in God that his daughter would be recreated, and restored to life by that same hand which, he knew, had created her. ..He who laid hands on her to form her from nothing, once more lays hands upon her to reform her from what had perished."

In both instances we see Jesus' personal concern for the needs of others and his readiness to heal and restore life. In Jesus we see the infinite love of God extending to

each and every individual as he gives freely and wholly of himself to each person he meets. Do you approach the Lord with confident expectation that he will hear your request and act?

"Lord, you love each of us individually with a unique and personal love. Touch my life with your saving power, heal and restore me to fullness of life. Help me to give wholly of myself in loving service to others."

Psalms 30:2-5,10-12

O LORD my God, I cried to thee for help, and thou hast healed me. O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.

For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me! O LORD, be thou my helper!"

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,

that my soul may praise thee and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.

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